JESUS DID NOT SPEAK ENGLISH

Posted on June 10, 2014 by Eddie

Category: Observations

It isn't often that I get called in to referee an argument between the Pope and the Israeli Prime Minister, but last week, I was interviewed by our local radio station about what language Jesus spoke. In what was a pleasant chat, I gave the generally accepted answer, that he probably spoke a number of languages; Aramaic in every day situations, Hebrew in religious contexts and perhaps some Greek or Latin.

However, what I really wanted to say was that JESUS DID NOT SPEAK ENGLISH!

Whatever those Sunday school posters might indicate, Jesus was not a blue-eyed, Englishman. He was a first century Jew and his life and teachings are rooted in the history of his nation. Right down to whichÂ languages he spoke in particularÂ situations. If we try to take Jesus out of his historical, linguistic and cultural setting we will fail to fully understand his teaching or the significance of his life, death and resurrection.

But - and this is amazing - JESUS DOES SPEAK ENGLISH!

Because the Gospels have been translated, we can read and hear Jesus' words in contemporary English. This is so much a part of our lives that we don't fully appreciate the strange wonder of it. The two-thousand year old story, rooted in Jewish life and culture can be read, and understood in modern English and in thousands of other languages for that matter. Though Jesus was a Rabbi, who lived in a particular context, his message is for all peoples in all times. Â It's a simple fact, but a wonderful one.

Jesus didn't speak English...

... he does now!

(For a brilliant - if just a littleÂ inaccurateÂ take on the same subject, have a look at this.)